

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) An apparatus for aligning a gas turbine engine blade including an airfoil and a dovetail, said apparatus comprising:

at least one locator pin configured to engage a serration formed on the blade dovetail;

a stationary locator block supporting said locator pin, said locator block comprising at least one groove sized to receive said locator pin therein;

a slide block assembly for engaging a dovetail surface opposite the serration, said slide block assembly configured to position the blade dovetail against said locator pin; and

a base member comprising a platform comprising an end plate, a bottom surface, and an opposite upper surface for supporting said slide block assembly and said locator block, said slide block assembly is slidably coupled to said platform upper surface, said locator block fixedly coupled to said platform upper surface, said platform upper surface defining a slotted opening extending through said bottom surface, said opening configured to receive the blade airfoil.

7. (previously presented) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said end plate extends from said platform upper surface.

8. (previously presented) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 7 wherein said slotted opening provides access to the turbine blade.

9. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 7 wherein said slide block assembly is movable between a first position wherein the blade dovetail is removable from the slide block assembly, and a second position, wherein the blade dovetail is secured to the slide block assembly.

10. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 7 wherein said at least one locator pin further comprises a pair of opposed pins configured to retain the blade dovetail therebetween.

11. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 7 wherein said slide block assembly comprises a push block for engaging, the dovetail surface opposite the serration, said push block configured to limit an amount of travel of said slide block.

12. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 7 further comprising a drive mechanism coupled to said end plate and said slide block for positioning said slide block.

13. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 12 wherein said drive mechanism comprises a pneumatic cylinder.

14. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 6 further comprising a gauge plate coupled to said locator block for positioning the turbine blade relative to said apparatus, said gauge plate comprising a gauge set block for providing a zero reference point.

15. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said locator pin comprises a first end, second end, and a clamping section extending therebetween, said clamping section having a length that is substantially equal to a length of the blade dovetail.

16. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 6 further comprising a locator plate comprising a stop for positioning the blade dovetail in said apparatus.

17. (currently amended) A tool for securing a turbine blade including an airfoil and a dovetail, said tool comprising:

a pair of locator pins configured to engage adjacent serrations defined in the turbine blade, each said locator pin comprising a first end, a second end, and a clamping section extending therebetween, said clamping section having a length that is substantially equal to a length of the blade dovetail;

a stationary locator block supporting said locator pins, said locator block comprising a plurality of grooves to receive each said locator pin therein;

a slide block assembly configured to engage the blade dovetail opposite said locator pins such that the blade dovetail is secured in said tool by said locator pins; and

a base member comprising a platform comprising an end plate, a bottom surface, and an opposite upper surface for supporting said slide block assembly and said locator block, said slide block assembly is slidably coupled to said platform upper surface, said locator block fixedly coupled to said platform upper surface, said platform upper surface defining a slotted opening extending through said bottom surface, said slotted opening configured to receive the blade airfoil.

18. (original) A tool in accordance with Claim 17 further comprising a gauge plate coupled to said locator block for locating the turbine blade relative to said apparatus, said gauge plate comprising a gauge set block for providing a zero reference point.

19. (previously presented) A tool in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said end plate extends from said platform upper surface.

20. (original) A tool in accordance with Claim 19 wherein said slide block assembly is movable between a first position wherein the blade dovetail is removable from the tool, and a second position wherein the blade dovetail is secured within the tool and between said locator pins and said slide block assembly.